

oh yes, you're giving me
longer and longer to
live ...
what would you do
if you had 2 months to
live?

well, he answered, I'd
drink and fuck,
plenty.

o.k., put me down for
the same.

now you're talking!
he said.

for a man with 2 months to
live
he looked pretty
satisfied.

SNAPSHOT (1985)

flailing away at infinity
the tiny winged night bug
on its back
under the desk lamp
kicks and struggles with
thread legs
under the heat of the
light
as in the corner of the
room
my fat yellow cat
lifts his left leg
high
and licks his precious
parts
as in the harbor now
a boat suddenly loosens
a horn sound

the cat stiffens, stops
licking

the bug becomes
motionless

then,
both at once,

they return to their
former
divertissements.

THE FOOL DINES OUT (1990)

I am with others, including my wife, it is a dark and overexpensive place, we order wine right off, high-priced stuff, the waiter brings it, applies corkscrew, pulls, and the prong rips right out of the cork leaving said cork within the bottle, so he reinserts the corkscrew, tugs, and here it happens again — corkscrew in the air, cork in the bottle.

"having a little trouble, eh? " I ask him.

my wife digs an elbow to my ribs, the waiter goes off for another bottle, returns, digs the corkscrew in again — same thing: out comes the corkscrew without the cork.

"you need another opener," I suggest.

I get another dig in the ribs, the waiter glowers at me, he's totally enraged, gives it another try, same result.

"wow!" I say.

the others at the table look at me as if I had just been convicted of child-rape and now everybody is enraged except me as the waiter goes for a third bottle, returns, and as he inserts the corkscrew he fixes his eyes upon me, he is in total fury and I silently (of course) wish him luck and this time he makes it.

I am the wine-taster, he pours me a bit, I give it a sip, wait a moment, nod to him that the wine is all right.

the remainder of our stay there the other people talk around me as if I am non-existent but upon hearing the conversation I am most happy that I am excluded.

upon leaving I pay the bill, tip 20%, and we walk toward the parking lot, they feeling that they have acted properly in a civilization of overexpensive restaurants, they even say goodnight to me as the valets rush for our overexpensive cars I